

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 007798

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA AND PRM; DHS FOR BCIS
ATHENS AND ROME FOR BCIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/01/2013

TAGS: [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: GOJ REITERATES PLEDGE TO CLOSE RUWEISHED REFUGEE
CAMP

REF: AMMAN 7017 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: CDA David Hale per 1.5 (b) and (d).

1. (U) In a November 30 press conference, Minister of Interior Samir Habashneh reaffirmed the GOJ's intent to close the Ruweished refugee camp after December 31. Referring to the 415 Palestinians who represent the core of the camp's population, Habashneh said "There is no solution for Palestinian refugees carrying Iraqi documents but to go back to Iraq." Habashneh told reporters the GOJ initially planned to close the camp in September but agreed to keep it open until the end of the year, when UNHCR promised a solution would be found for the refugees.

2. (SBU) UNHCR Senior Protection Officer Jacqueline Parlevliet told refcoord that Habashneh's public statements followed a demarche made by the Jordanian Ambassador to Geneva to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees during the week of November 17. Parlevliet added that the GOJ approach, made at the very highest levels in Geneva, signals that the GOJ is firmly committed to the December 31 deadline and, based on previous discussions, will likely move the remaining camp residents to the no-man's land camp between the Jordanian and Iraqi border posts. Parlevliet doubts the Palestinians would willingly move to the no-man's land camp and expressed concern that the no-man's land camp (currently home to 1,063 Iranian Kurds) would be able to withstand winter flashfloods. Although the GOJ has discussed the possibilities for moving the camp to higher land within no-man's land, Parlevliet said no progress has been made.

3. (C) Comment: We also believe the GOJ is serious in its intent to close the camp sometime after December 31 and move the remaining refugees to no-man's land. The GOJ has made unsuccessful approaches to the Egyptian, Lebanese and Israeli governments, asking them to take Palestinians with ties to those countries or, in the case of Israel, to allow transit to the West Bank and Gaza. (While the Egyptian Government allowed one family that includes an Egyptian passport holder to return to Egypt, the Egyptian embassy told us the GOE will not allow other Palestinians from Ruweished to travel to Egypt.) We doubt any Ruweished camp residents would willingly move to the no-man's land camp but note that any involuntary movements would not constitute refoulement as the no-man's land camp is within Jordanian territory. While conditions in the no-man's land camp are not ideal, they at least provide temporary refuge until durable solutions can be found for the remaining 1,500 refugees from both camps. We will continue to encourage the GOJ to allow the Ruweished camp to remain open -- at least until those refugees accepted into the U.S. resettlement program are able to travel -- and, failing any progress, will encourage the GOJ to allow the necessary improvements to be made to the no-man's land camp.

4. (U) CPA Baghdad minimize considered.
HALE